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If Keats meant to make these words which Bertha read from her book awaken ideas concerning her own birth and character in her mind, the true facts as set forth in *The Cap and Bells* would lend full force to the "cheated."

It is, of course, possible that Keats's first idea for *The Eve of St. Mark* was changed earlier than I have here suggested ⁴—even before he first referred to the poem in February, 1819. The important thing, however, is that it probably was changed; and his renewed interest in the whole matter in the autumn of 1819 makes that a likely time for the altered story to have occurred to him.

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THE PAMPHLETS OF THE BYRON SEPARATION

"The pageant of his bleeding heart" which Byron bore across Europe resembles other pageants in that behind it one finds a litter of paper and odds and ends; bibliographers, those patient sweepers, have been busy gathering them up ever since, yet, despite their efforts to collect them into the proper receptacles, many scraps are still blowing about the world. In these unconsidered trifles, as in all the relics that humanity leaves behind it on its stormful journey across the astonished earth, I find something of interest, something of pathos. Five stages in Byron's pageant are specially marked for us by the amount of litter that remains: the period immediately

⁴ Sir Sidney Colvin, in his recent life of Keats (New York, 1917), gives it as his belief that "Keats never got on with this poem after his first three or four days' work" (p. 437).

¹ From a large quantity of material that the writer has been gathering for several years in preparation for a study of the prestige of Byron in England, to be completed, it is hoped, by the centennial anniversary of his death, it is possible, and seems worth while, to publish certain selections of sufficient interest in themselves to stand alone. Part of this material has already appeared in the *New York Nation*, in *Notes and Queries*, and in *Modern Language Notes*. This method of calling attention to various items of Byroniana serves by way of invitation to other specialists to make suggestions with regard to *addenda* and *corrigenda*. In the present instance I shall be very glad to hear of other pamphlets dealing with the period of the separation.

following his separation from his wife; the period from 1819 on, when the English world was scandalized openly and secretly delighted by *Don Juan*; the years that followed Byron's death, when the first attempts were being made to judge and appraise his work and career; 1869-70, when the Stowe scandal was much discussed; and 1898-1906, when the publication of the definitive edition of his works and the *Astarte* "revelations" turned attention to him anew. It is with the first stage that I am here concerned; not with the old unhappy far-off story of the separation itself but with the comment, set forth in quaint, shabby little pamphlets, that it evoked.

The strain of vulgarity in Byron which shocked Matthew Arnold was mixed with an even more repellant strain of what our ancestors called "sensibility." Something of both these qualities went to the making of the poem "Fare thee well!" into which Byron poured his overwrought feelings in the spring of 1816 at the time of the separation and which, unwisely, he printed for private circulation among his friends. I do not think that he intended to publish these verses and the companion satiric *Sketch* of Lady Byron's housekeeper; but the two pieces were piratically printed in the *Champion* newspaper of April 14, 1816, and from its columns were widely copied in the press. There followed immediately a number of pirated editions of Lord Byron's *Poems on his Domestic Circumstances*, among the publishers being R. Edwards and the redoubtable William Hone, both of them men whose names occur frequently in the history of Byron's early reputation. An incredible number of these issues appeared from various presses,² Hone's pamphlet alone going through fifteen editions in 1816. And as they grew in number these collections increased also in size, taking on accretions in the shape of various spurious pieces, political and personal, that were audaciously attributed to Byron. (The history of these forg-

² The list of these editions in Mr. E. H. Coleridge's bibliography, notwithstanding the admirable care with which that compilation is put together, is not complete. For example: *Poems on his Domestic Circumstances by Lord Byron . . . to which is prefixed, The Life of the Noble Author*. London: Richard Edwards, 1816, which is of some importance because of Edwards' other connections with Byron bibliography, is omitted. In this pamphlet all the poems are genuine save "O Shame to thee, Land of the Gaul," concerning the curious history of which piece I shall have something to say on another occasion.

eries will be found in some notes on "The Byron Apocrypha" that I am going to publish presently.) Public opinion was against Byron, the more so because the private scandal synchronized with the publication of certain lines against the Prince Regent and with certain others that were thought to betray an unpatriotic sympathy with Napoleon. The personal and political *motifs* intermingle in a sort of counterpoint.

Lady Byron was a good, well-meaning and odious creature. "She should have married Wordsworth," Henley once remarked; "he would have had plenty of opportunity to learn 'how awful goodness is.'" Being good, well-meaning and odious, she had the British public back of her. They rushed into print in her defense.³ Richard Edwards, having helped stir up interest by pirating Byron's pieces, published *Lady Byron's Responsive "Fare thee well"* (London, 1816) which is described in an introductory note as "the offering of a common friend of the persons most nearly concerned." The poem is in 23 four-line stanzas and is dated April 29, 1816. Lady Byron is made to assert her continuing love for her husband and to declare that she and her lord were parted by treachery. In the future she will renew in her child's face his "thrice dear lineaments" (an anticipation of "Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child?"). "Every glimpse of future gladness" has vanished from her; but her doubts, fears and woe would cease did she know that Byron was at peace. This production is followed by nine stanzas called *Conciliator to Lady Byron* in which she is urged to

"put forth a hand
The more than classic head to raise."

A son of Phœbus must be expected to roam wide; Daphne and Thetis must both be loved; Christian forgiveness (apparently despite the confusion of theologies) must be practiced.

"I countenance no debauchees;—
I urge no justifying prayer;—
I joy to see him on his knees;
But wilt thou not receive him there?"

³ Many of these pieces, despite the diligence of various workers, especially Elze and Kölbing, are here described for the first time. It is strange how comparatively ignored they have been by most of Byron's biographers.

So shall the darling of the Nine
 Bless thee with unremitting love:—
 So shall the little darling join
 In chorus with the blest above.”

As unctuously charitable as this is *A Reply to Fare thee Well!!! Lines Addressed to Lord Byron*. [Motto] London: R. S. Kirby, 1816. This is a hoax, the pretended author being Lady Byron. It is in 21 four-line stanzas. Lady Byron declares that Love, if nursed by fond affection, endures forever, but that neglect and insult kill it. Yet she has compassion on Byron's frailties and admits his “matchless talent.” What a pity that he allowed himself to be led astray! “The tender pledge of soft affection” will “oft revive fond recollection”; perhaps the prayers of mother and daughter will gain pardon for Byron's errors; he is already forgiven by his wife. This is followed by *To a Sleeping Infant*, “by the same,” in nine stanzas. If “the pledge of love” knew how “that breast is fraught with woe” she would refuse to be fed “from sorrow's stream.” And much more to like effect.

A third *Reply to Lord Byron's “Fare thee Well”* (Newcastle: S. Hodgson, 1817) is in a different tone, its hostility towards the poet being unmixed with any charity towards his faults. “Talk not of sever'd love,” exclaims the author (who signs himself “C”), while you boast of your errors. You have the

“Sceptic's art
 To charm the fancy—but corrupt the heart.”

A companion piece from the same press, in the same year, and (judging from the style) by the same hand, is: *Lines Addressed to Lady Byron*. This is very sympathetic in tone and bids her Ladyship trust in God in whom peace will be found and find consolation in “her little form rear'd on thy bosom.” A great deal of “sensitivity” was evidently expended by worthy people upon Ada, future Countess of Lovelace!

The fashion of replying to *Fare thee Well* did not quickly die out; as late as 1825 one finds *Lady Byron's Reply to her Lord's Farewell, with Referential Notes to the Lines in Lord Byron's Poem particularly alluded to by her Ladyship*. This title is given by Bertram Dobell in *Notes and Queries* (6th Series, vi, 17), without a publisher's name. I have been unable to discover a copy. H. Sculthorp (*ibid.*) says: “A gentleman . . . hazarded the assertion that [these

lines] were composed for Lady Byron by Campell, the poet." This is at least possible, for Campbell was a friend of her Ladyship, and later ill repaid the favors done him by Byron by blackguarding his memory at the time of the appearance of Moore's *Life*.

Byron's satiric *Sketch from Private Life* (on Mrs. Clermont, Lady Byron's companion) occasioned the bitter parody: *A Sketch from Public Life: A Poem founded upon recent Domestic Circumstances; with Weep not for me! and other Poems*, London: William Hone, 1816. This was probably written by that picturesque fire-brand, Hone, himself, who annoyed Byron on various later occasions. A prose foreword notes that this *Sketch* is designed as "an antidote to the poison" of Byron's poem. In the verses themselves "Harold" is called "a base, un-loved, un-loving, sordid elf" who feels only for himself. The public has been "gulled into admiration of a knave." His song shall not protect him:

"Injured power of Virtue! come along!
And crush the worm through all its slime of song."

The fallen weak are merely pitiable; but derision and contempt follow the great who are vile and base. They shall live

"and wish in vain to die,
Scorched in the burning sun of infamy."

A charitable and sane account of the separation is contained in the prose *Narrative of the Circumstances which attended the Separation of Lord and Lady Byron; Remarks on his Domestic Conduct, and a complete Refutation of the Calumnies Circulated by Public Writers*, London: Richard Edwards, 1816. It declares that Byron, exposed by his talents to the "shafts and sarcasms of pretenders," has foiled all their attacks on his poetry. They now attempt to deform his character. There is a long account of the methods employed by such assailants. The public has a right to know the true explanation of the affair. There follows a fairly accurate account of Lady Byron's departure from her home and of her suddenly announced resolution (following more than one friendly letter) not to return there. The "panders to a depraved taste" who have perverted this plain tale are denounced; and the pamphlet ends: "Recal him, recal him, noble Lady; be yours the gentle hand stretched out to save him; recal him to your heart," etc., etc.

Byron's departure for the continent created a new sensation one

result of which was the publication of some extremely censorious *Lines on the Departure of a Great Poet from his Country*, London: John Booth, 1816. The preface begins:

"However great the poetical merits of that celebrated person may be, who has for some years past been wearying the public with the waywardness of his fancies, and the gloom of a misguided imagination, the blemishes of his character are equally glaring."

The author's object is to give "at least one public expression" to sentiments generally held concerning these blemishes; the justification for such personalities may be found in Byron's own publication of his domestic pieces. The poem begins:

"From native England, that endur'd too long
The ceaseless burden of his impious song,
His mad career of crimes and follies run,
And grey in vice when life was scarce begun;
He goes . . ."

Does he leave friends behind? No: all "suppress the generous tear." Genius still dwells in that sinful mind, but she holds a barren court there. There are no signs of repentance. Byron may scorn these lines, but his heart must confess the truth of this "plain picture of [his] guilt and woe." The whole closes with a final appeal to repent:

"Wert thou advanc'd beyond all bards in fame,
In wit unrivall'd—as thou art in shame—
How would it profit thee in time to come,
When summon'd to thy last most dreaded home,
Tho' praise should dwell upon thy latest verse,
Tho' mournful Muses should adorn thy hearse,
To be recorded, when thy race is run,
England's best Poet, and her guiltiest Son?"

Two sets of spurious poems accompanied Byron's departure from England: *Lord Byron's Farewell to England* . . . (London: J. Johnson, 1816) and *Reflections on Shipboard, by Lord Byron* (London: Kirby and Allason, 1816). These are sufficiently related to the separation-theme to require mention here, but I reserve a detailed account of them for my notes on the various Byron forgeries. There, too, will be found a description of the curious piece, *Lord Byron's Pilgrimage to the Holy Land* (London: J. Johnston, 1817), which is more remotely connected with the separation.

The most disreputable of all the pamphlets concerning the separa-

tion is *Leon to Annabella. An Epistle after the Manner of Ovid* (London: MacJohn, Raymur and Co.). This piece should be classed among the Byron fraudulent poems except that the motto, "Se non è vero, è ben trovato" is a confession that it is a hoax. A prose "Notice to the Reader" recounts how the confused fragments of manuscript from which the poem was pieced together were found in a peasant's hut near the roadside outside of Pisa, where an English gentleman "whose name could not be learned" used to come to shoot at a target. The poem occupies fourteen pages; it is in rimed couplets; and pretends to be by Byron himself. It narrates his evil upbringing; his marriage; his growing disillusionment; the separation; and his flight from England. It is very coarse and cynical. The pamphlet is printed in a most slovenly fashion. It is undated, but belongs evidently to the Venetian period of Byron's life. It is of the utmost rarity, the only copy that I have ever heard of being in the library of Mr. J. P. Morgan, through whose courtesy I have been permitted to examine it. In 1866 it was reprinted along with the shameless fabrication *Don Leon*.

As the sensation caused by the private scandal died away adverse criticism turned more exclusively to Byron's impiety and immorality for subjects of attack. This will appear some day from my notes on the *Cain*-pamphlets and the *Don Juan*-pamphlets. An appropriate close to the series of pieces concerning his private affairs is one called forth by *Manfred: An Address to the Right Hon. Lord Byron, with an opinion on some of his writings, by F. H. B.*⁴ (London: Wetton and Jarvis, 1817). This poem begins with an appeal to Byron to "mingle with his kind"—

"The spirit of thy loneliness, the strain
Pervades—'tis seen in Conrad,—and its chill
Gives Lara deeper horror.—Manfred, now,
Surpasses all; cold damp surmounts my brow,
As pond'ring o'er his incantation dread!"

The poet is warned that knowledge misapplied and talents abused "shall work eternal woe." He should make God's glory his theme; his heroes should be virtuous, patient, tender, religious; if Byron aims at Singularity, then let it be the "singularly good." Of

⁴ Not "T. H. B." as given in *Notes and Queries*, 4th Series, I, 167, and in Lowndes' *Bibliography*, I, 340.

Manfred (which a generation later was to provoke Meredith's satire) a note says:

"Bad as is the age, we yet dare hope and believe no English audience would endure the daring impiety of many of the scenes. Even in the closet it shocks us to peruse dialogues between demons, spirits, a star, a witch, and *Manfred*."

Another note refers to the "Hymn of the Spirits" in the second act: "We forbear to quote the passage, which is dreadfully impious." All this calls to mind the wise disrespectful words:

"Considerably was the world
Of spinsterdom and clergy racked!"

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KING CNUT'S SONG AND BALLAD ORIGINS

King Cnut's song, according to Professor Gummere,¹ gives us our "first example of actual ballad structure and the ballad's metrical form, which is to be met in English records." He quotes the account from the *Historia Eliensis* of 1166. Cnut, with his queen Emma and divers of the great nobles, was coming by boat to Ely, and, as they neared land, the King stood up, and told his men to row slowly while he looked at the great church and listened to the song of the monks which came sweetly over the water. "Then he called all who were with him in the boats to make a circle about him, and in the gladness of his heart he bade them join him in song, and he composed in English a ballad [*cantilenam*] which began as follows:

Murie sungen the muneches binnen Ely,
Tha Cnut ching rew ther by.

Roweth, cnihtes, noer the land,
And here we thes muneches saeng!

The chronicler turns this into Latin, saying then, "and so the rest, as it is sung in these days by the people in their dances, and handed down as proverbial."

The Latin original reads: *quae usque hodie in choris publice*

¹ *The Popular Ballad*, pp. 58 ff., 249; also *Old English Ballads*, 254.